

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-16 and 18-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4-6, 8, 14 and 18 are amended. Claims 3, 11 and 17 are canceled.

Reconsideration of the present application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) does not present any additional claims; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 3, 4, 6, 11 and 17 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claims. The allowable subject matter features of claim 3 have been incorporated into base claim 1, and the features of original base claim 1 have been incorporated into claims 4 and 6. As such, claims 1, 4 and 6 are in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 5 and 7, which depend from claim 1, are likewise in condition for allowance for at least the reason of their dependence on claim 1, as well as for additional features they recite. Likewise, the allowable subject matter features of claim 11 have been incorporated into base claim 8. As such, claim 8 is in condition for allowance. Claims 9, 10, 12 and 13, which depend from claim 8, are likewise in condition for allowance for at least their dependence on claim 8, as well as for additional features they recite. Similarly, the allowable subject matter features of claim 17 have been incorporated into base claim 14. As such, claim 14 is in condition for allowance. Claims 15, 16 and 18-20, which depend from claim 14, are likewise in condition for allowance for at least their dependence on claim 14, as well as for additional features they recite.

Moreover, claims 5 and 18 have been amended at Applicants' preference for better clarity.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:JLC/aaw

Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time  
Notice of Appeal  
Amendment Transmittal

Date: August 11, 2004

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